

JUST A FEW MINUTES PLEASE . . .

"My whole ambition in life is to set in motion a machinery which will bring noble ideas to the door of every body . . ." - Swami Vivekananda

We are inspired. The booklet in your hands is a humble effort in that direction.

This booklet is English adaptation of Telugu book titled **MEE MARGAM – MEE GAMYAM**. During the one and a half year since Ganesh Chavithi, 2005, more than 1,20,000 copies of the Telugu book got distributed. The blessings of the elders and readers have emboldened us to reach the non-Telugu population, and hence this effort. Further, some Telugu people for various reasons, prefer to read something only when it is presented in English – it is hoped that this attempt would meet their preference.

Everybody dreams that their life must become a bed of roses. But only a few, put in the required efforts, begin the journey to mould their life. Even among those few, only fewer still, act with determined perseverance, and succeed in achieving their goal.

It is our humble effort to make **a presentation of inspiring suggestions and heart-to-heart hints**, in a capsule form, so as to motivate people to have the initial enthusiasm required for taking the needed initiative to mould their lives, so as to become better human beings, and better citizens. We hope that this offering will reach the vast number of people, who must be motivated to first drive away their inferiority complex and "**Arise! Awake! And stop not till the goal is reached!**" In order to make them: "**Wake Up! Take Up! Make Up! And Come Up!**" - this small booklet is being offered at a subsidised rate to facilitate reaching the masses.

Many good books, inspiring quotations, good advice by inspired souls, broadcast / telecast at dawn and early hours, on various channels on TV, Success stories and Failure stories as well, inspiring spiritual and philosophical wisdom, published in popular dailies, have influenced us considerably. Further, friends' encouragement gave us the enthusiasm, zeal and the spirit. We felt that the joy we have experienced must be spread and made available to all, and this effort is the result.

Many books in English and Telugu on various aspects of personality development have moulded our thinking and brought about a significant change in our outlook towards life. We have come to know the value of life, and how to live happily; how to be a positive and contributing citizen. We have begun our journey and are feeling the happiness that results from a genuine effort to spread happiness among others, in a selfless way.

Why this Book ? We hope that the contents of the book will motivate appreciation and acquisition of human value orientation; developing positive attitudes; improving self-confidence; becoming better citizens; obtain a helpful view of man-making and character-forming besides helping people to enjoy a happy, purposeful and enjoyable life.

This Book is meant for whom ? It is mainly meant for students in particular and the youth, in general. However, it is hoped that the contents would be useful to everybody, irrespective of the age / stage of life.

Reading habit is fast declining, thanks to the ever-spreading habit of addiction to TV and Internet. We hope that attempts must be made to revive the reading habit, particularly of really useful books, and hence, this presentation. We feel that everyone must make it a habit to read good books, particularly books on 'PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT'. It is a point of small detail, whether you buy or borrow the books from the Library or from friends, but good reading is the main point, which no body should miss.

We thank Sri Ch. Brahmana Chary, M.A., B.Ed., whose initiative has prompted us to bring out this English adaptation of the original Telugu booklet.

We must all live inspired lives; we must all try to spread the good and inspiring messages; any thing bad anywhere, is a threat to everything good everywhere; hence, we must do our little bit and try to spread the good things.

We humbly thank all the noble and great souls.

Yours well wishers,

Prof. Vangapally Viswanadham & Vegeesna Govinda Raju

Sree Rama Navami, (27 March, 2007)

Our 1st Publication : “మీ పూర్వం – మీ గమ్మం” Presented by Prof. Vangapally Viswanadham and Vegeesna Govinda Raju (20 Pages Rs.3/-), **Our 2nd Publication :** “Personality Development” - Presented by Prof. Vangapally Viswanadham and Vegeesna Govinda Raju (28 Pages Rs.4/-), **Our 4th Publication :** “వ్యక్తిత్వ వికాసం” –ఆచార్య పంగపల్లి విశ్వవిధానం, డా॥ జి.ఎల్.కె. దుర్గల సమర్పణ (36 పేజీలు రూ. 6/-), **Our 5th Publication :** “369 మంచిముఖ్యాలు” పూర్వాచిచే మంచి అలోచనలు. సమర్పణ : మేగెస్టు గోవిందరాజు (20 పేజీలు రూ. 4/-).

TO SUCCEED IN LIFE . . .

You need self-confidence to persist in your efforts; unless you practice perseverance with discipline, you will not succeed in your life. Sincere prayers improve self-confidence. Prayer is essentially a reminder of a promise which you are making to yourself – with the difference that the prayer is addressed to the Almighty, requesting him to strengthen your determination and make you deserve his grace so that you can be blessed with success. **Thus, prayer every day, is an attempt to invite positive thoughts, reinforce our faith in the values, in the presence of the Almighty.**

Regular prayer is a self-reminder. **Read this promise with concentration everyday.** You will find that your confidence is getting strengthened. Commit yourself to practicing it with your heart and soul. We are sure and we confidently believe that you will start experiencing the improved self-confidence if you repeat the promise to yourself continuously for a minimum of 21 days.

[Please write your name and put your signature with date]

THIS IS THE PROMISE I AM MAKING TO MYSELF.

1. That I will be strong, and I will not allow anything to disturb my peace of mind.
2. That I will be positive in thought, word and action; I will share my happiness and positive views about health and prosperity with all those I interact; I will appreciate and make it a point to mention the positive points in my family members, friends and others and motivate them to develop further.
3. That I will think only positive and good thoughts of the highest quality; I will be positive in my words and actions and work to the best of my ability for the highest success and good of all. Just as I would be eagerly looking forward to see success in my endeavours, I will look forward for others' success also in the same way and further contribute whatever I can, to help others succeed in their good endeavours.
4. That I would learn lessons from my own mistakes and faults and try to reach higher levels of success in my future endeavours; I will not get discouraged and rededicate myself, with an undisturbed smile revealing unshaken self-confidence. I will wholeheartedly greet everybody with a smile.
5. That I will commit myself to my progress and try relentlessly. I won't use my time and talent to criticise others, I will not feel dejected and lost; I will not get angry, I will reject fear, I will tackle the difficulties and the problems with a smile; I am determined to succeed.

18 PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL LIFE

Everybody wants to be happy; achieve something in their life. You should not stop merely with wishful thinking; you have to **commit yourself**; move forward in a pragmatic manner; think clearly; plan appropriately; implement your plans with perseverance; then, and only then, you will have the chance of succeeding in transforming your **dreams into a reality**.

You must **awaken your internal strengths**, with determination and only then you will be awakened and it will become possible to **lead a meaningful life**. Some concepts, useful to appreciate the purpose of life in the right perspective are presented for you to ponder; to reflect; to awaken; to realise; to achieve; and to be happy.

1. Life means Time. Life consists of time and nothing else. Time is precious and very valuable in life. Cultivate the habit of making the best use of your time. **DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME, IT WON'T COME BACK AGAIN**. Do not waste anything. Everything must be put to proper use. Equip yourself with the required strengths for continuous development.

2. Be Positive. Let always positive and good thoughts come in to your mind; always try to be smiling, happy and enthusiastic; be human value oriented; sincerely attempt to do good things.

3. Goals. Set specific goals for different dimensions of your life, such as personal, family, professional financial, social and spiritual, etc. Examine the various possibilities. Observe and study the available opportunities; recognise your strengths and further strengthen your strengths, abilities and acumen. Equip yourself with the required new strengths. Weaken your existing weaknesses. Never ever invite any new weaknesses. **Be clear about your goals and formulate plans and strategies**; have specific time frames for achieving what you want to achieve. Commence the journey. Don't forget to review periodically; initiate appropriate measures. Never let your enthusiasm get diluted or distracted. '**Stop not till the goal is reached**'.

4. Faith and Self-confidence. Have faith in yourself. Develop self-confidence; strive to **improve your self-confidence levels continuously**. Avoid over-confidence. Working for your own good is understandable but ensure simultaneously that it should also be consistent with the good of others. **Ensure that you give your honest best, always**, as it would further improve your self-confidence. Be confident about your efforts. Discipline and perseverance will ensure that your endeavours become successful. Work with sanguine optimism.

5. Successes and Failures. Both successes and failures are common in human life. Expecting that you must always succeed, that you should never fail, is not recognising the reality. Remember, failures are stepping-stones to success. **Success is never ending and failure is never final**. If for some reason you happen to fail, analyse carefully as to what went wrong be objective; identify the real reasons for the failure; don't generalize or blame others or the circumstances or your luck. Think critically without bias. Understand the reasons for failure, rectify them and rededicate yourself with redoubled enthusiasm; start once again; **let not failure discourage you**. It is said that 'to err is human'. Not learning from the mistakes is the real failure. Learn to overcome the obstacles and failures. **Always learn to act with strong perseverance**. Also remember that there will be lessons to be learnt, even when you have succeeded. **This is the secret of trying to improve continuously**.

6. Critical and constructive analysis. You must develop the ability to analyze, sharply, critically and constructively, both your successes and failures. Similarly keenly observe, understand, analyze and learn from both the failures and successes of others. **Learning from your own experience**

is important; learning from others experiences as well, is the fast track programme that helps you to move fast forward towards success. Remember, it is this analysis that helps to enlarge and enrich the opportunities of your success.

7. Applying the powers of critical and constructive analysis. We are usually very critical and sharp in our ability to critically observe others; note that this keen ability of ours can also be equally effectively used to understand your own weaknesses. **You can surely use your keen observational powers to introspect your own self.** Know about your own weaknesses. Remember to weaken and eliminate your weaknesses. You experience the power of enthusiasm and tend to become happier.

8. Physical and Mental Health. Develop your physical health and immunity levels. Ill health results in a waste of time, loss of opportunities, and more importantly upsets your mind and mood. It is much more important to take care of your mental health, as well. Variations in the physical health are easily visible, and we tend to take care, on an urgent footing. **It is important to note that it is more important to take care of your mental health. Being positive in Thought, Word and Action, good friends, being spiritual etc. will help a great deal in taking care of your mental health.** Ensure that you actually have a plan of action for improving both your physical and mental health, and sincerely implement actively, to effect improvement on both fronts.

9. Be equally attentive to even small things. It is the small victories that lay the required foundations for the great victories. Series of small victories will continuously boost your self-confidence and thus become stepping-stones to bigger triumphs. Each small victory must be considered as a turning point, and hence, never look down upon the innumerable small and simple tasks that you perform almost in a routine manner. Don't neglect any task, however small; give your honest and sincere best to all the tasks you perform. Make it a habit to improve your performance, always. Your victories develop your confidence and you get motivated to accept greater responsibilities.

10. Constant company of good things. Positive and enthusing thoughts, inspiring quotations, good soft and elevating music, regular reading of good books, companionship of good friends, and particularly more important is your sincere endeavour – are the things that make you feel happy. Continue to be in constant touch with the good things that you already have and go on actively adding – this is the way to enjoy living your life. Yes. Every moment of life must be lived fully and joyfully.

11. Eliminate inferiority complex. Don't fall into the trap of underestimating your abilities and suspecting your potential. May be, you have not given yourself a fair chance to know your potential. Don't entertain any inferiority feelings. Never suspect your ability to take charge of your life and make a difference. Abandon weakening attitudes.

12. 'HELP EVER, HURT NEVER.' It is good to remember that by first developing the habit of helping others, others would come forward to help you. Without helping others, you have no right to expect that they must help you. Helping others, particularly the needy and the deserving, will give you a sense of joyous feeling and boost your self-confidence. **Consider helping others as an opportunity to test your knowledge, skills and attitudes; as an opportunity to improve your self.** You will surely improve a lot, by serving others, as you will have improved confidence in yourself.

13. Successful life. What are the things needed for living a successful life? Clarity about the goals, purity in heart, sanctity in choosing the ways and means to achieve the goals, the determination,

the concentration, the disciplined dedication, the insistence on perseverance are the things needed to attain success. Become aware of the natural law that you cannot expect instant fulfilment; you have to learn to wait; wait for the results to show; wait patiently to enjoy the fruits of your efforts. You cannot expect to reap the harvest on the very day, you have sown the seed. You have to cultivate the habit of waiting patiently for the results of your efforts.

14. Comparison. We have a lot to learn by observing – particularly observing others - observing particularly those who are better than us. Comparison inevitably leads to an evaluation of our own talents, strengths and weaknesses with that of others. Surely we will find many aspects, in respect of which others are better than us. **Never, never, feel jealousy at others.** When you find that others are better than you in one respect or the other, then motivate yourself to become better. Sometimes, you may find that you are better than others; in which case, **never feel proud**; begin considering the ways available for you to help those who are willing to learn from you. Motivate them to become better. Whatever be the level of other's performance, **never insult others; be positive and help them to improve themselves further.**

15. Competitive Spirit. Comparison necessarily leads to competition. Appreciate the need and beauty of the competitive ambiance; without a competitive spirit, no progress can be achieved. Competition is normally understood as competing with others; **it is more important to compete with your own self; you must constantly strive to improve on your own earlier performance.** Become constantly better, from where you are, to a higher level, to a nobler level, to an excellent level. Up and Up, constantly coming Up by first comparing your present performance with your own past performance, and also with that of the performance of others.

16. Selfishness and Selflessness. Being selfish is natural and understandable. The earlier you realise the better it is, that **diluting selfishness is the secret of enjoying life.** Reduce selfishness at least by 1%. Go on increasing the proportion of selflessness. Be positive and be optimistic. Helping others helps in reducing your selfishness; do it, in your own interest. If for some reason, you are not in a position to help others, at least make sure that you are not harming others, either directly or indirectly.

17. Learn continuously. You must be aware of the truth that you must be a life-long learner. You must develop your knowledge and skills. All learning is a continuous process. **Develop the ability to 'Learn to Learn'.** Learning to learn makes future learning easier. Keep on reading inspiring books. They would really make a big difference.

18. Do it with Love. Remember to **add LOVE to whatever you are doing.** When you have LOVE in your heart, you are awakening divinity in you. Whatever you do, do it with your heart that is filled with love. Fill your thoughts, words, and actions with love, sanctity and purity, so that you begin to manifest your inherent godly nature. This is the easiest way to awaken spirituality in our life.

Start putting efforts to make your life successful.

**Mere awareness does not produce results;
it is the initiated actions that produce results.**

Commence your journey of self-development.

**START THE DAY WITH LOVE;
SPEND THE DAY WITH LOVE;
FILL THE DAY WITH LOVE AND
END THE DAY WITH LOVE –**

THAT IS THE WAY TO FIND GOD

– SATYA SAI BABA

15 ACTION POINTS

TO STRENGTHEN AND FURTHER DEVELOP YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE

If you don't believe in yourself, no other belief will help you. Believe in yourself. You are unique: not just one of the ordinary persons; if only you are serious, you can become extra ordinary. In case you don't believe in yourself, what right you have to expect that others must believe in you. However tentative it might be, measure your own self-confidence level, on a scale 1 to 10. Now decide on further improving it continuously. **Self-confidence is not being proud or in any way arrogant.** You must also develop self-respect. Only after experiencing your self-worth, you will have some self-respect. Sincere efforts lead to successes and series of successes will improve your self-confidence. There is nothing like Self-confidence, as the initial investment needed in beginning self-development. Consider carefully the hints for improving your self-confidence.

1. Attitude towards responsibilities. Shoulder and fulfil your responsibilities, unhesitatingly and smilingly. Be careful while giving any word to others; as a matter of fact, even when you are promising yourself something, be serious. Once you give a word, stick to it; fulfil it; sometimes, fulfilling the given word may mean you have to suffer some inconvenience or loss, in order to fulfil the word you have given. Get recognized as a 'trustworthy person' – who would stand by the given word. **Let your behaviour be such that it boosts the confidence that others have in you.** Get the reputation that you are a person who completes the accepted responsibility in a wholehearted manner. Gaining the confidence of others boosts your self-confidence and feeds on itself. People start trusting you, which results in their entrusting you with many more and bigger responsibilities. Thus, new opportunities will begin to come in search of you. You get awokened and the future journey becomes easier to that extent.

2. Have a friendly disposition. Respect others. Respect others' opinions, even when they are different from that of yours. Gossip, lose talk, and avoidable arguments might break friendships and turn your friends into enemies. It is not that easy to obtain good friends; you need to carefully cultivate and maintain friendship. Let the number of your good friends be on the increase. Your intelligence and experience should never be used to look down upon others; also, should never be used to cheat others. However, **you must certainly use your intelligence not to be cheated by others.** Be clear about the difference between mere acquaintances and friends. Out of the many friends, only very few can be considered as good friends; of the good friends, fewer still would be bosom friends. Ensure that you have good friends.

3. Attitude towards work. Do your work sincerely and to the best of your ability. Learn to enjoy doing your job, in the best possible manner. Successes and failures are both common – and hence, you must **acquire the equanimity to have a balanced mind**, which does not over react. Maintain your poise.

4. Positive Attitude. Develop the habit of dwelling in positive and good thoughts. **Good thoughts form the basis for good words, habits and actions. Your actions determine your life.** You need not wait for a good day to begin doing good things. Any day and every day is a good day for beginning to do good things.

5. Wake up with a smile. It is good to develop the habit of waking up everyday, as early as possible, with a smile. **Develop the habit of spending some time doing your prayers.** Thank Mother Nature for all her love and abundance. Pray that something good must happen through you. Pray that you should not do any harm to any one or any thing. Every night, make it a habit to review the good things that you have done. Study your sleeping habits and examine whether there is any scope for an improvement. Ensure that you succeed in increasing the number of active hours that can be productively employed for your development. Whenever you are doing something for a second time, make sure that you are able to do it consciously in a better way; may be you would take less time but ensure that you **do not compromise on quality.** The awareness that you are committed to constant improvement will help in you acquiring the finer nuances.

6. Develop time management skills. Develop the habit of preparing plans and working according to them. Incorporate into the plans the benefit of experiences obtained. Have clear time-frames for the tasks. Never compromise on quality. Honestly try to accomplish better results, in lesser time and at lower cost. Acquire the habit of economising on the resources. Avoid wastage of any type, and that is the secret of acquiring and possessing wealth.

7. Problems, Obstacles and Failures. However much you may wish, life is not always likely to be a bed of roses – remember that nature has endowed roses with thorns. Face the problems; overcome the obstacles; plan well to avoid failures. There is nothing uncommon in encountering problems. Procrastination, i.e. the habitual tendency to postpone things, will only result in increasing the intensity of the problem, and the problem may even become more serious and unsolvable. Think of solving the problem. **Right decisions, timely action, unshakable faith, constant efforts are the things required to face the problems.**

Discuss with your well wishers and close friends to find out whether there are any better solutions, than the one you have thought of. **Advice can be sought from others, but the decision must be taken carefully, only by you.**

8. Avoid Negative Attitude. Negative thoughts do a lot of damage. Don't ever tolerate negative thoughts. Keep yourself always away from such negative environment. Keep yourself away from negative people. **Avoid negative thoughts, negative words and negative actions.**

9. Review. Make it a habit to review every night what you have accomplished during that day. Evaluate the success and the progress as well as the failures and the setbacks. Carefully study whether there are any lessons to be learnt; points missed; details omitted and so on. Prepare the plan for the next day, in the light of the experiences obtained that day. **Develop the habit of reading some inspiring and soul-lifting book, for a while, before retiring for the day. It is important that when you decide to go to bed, your mind should be full of good and positive thoughts of hope and optimism. This is the secret that helps you to get up next morning, fully relaxed and with enthusiasm.** Life without difficulties is rare.

10. Value acquiring Experience. It is very rare to have a very smooth and lucky life. It is rarer still to enjoy series of successes – i.e. without any failures and setbacks whatsoever. Do not curse the presence of obstacles and set backs. Defeats give you the opportunity to learn many new things and will set in motion a correcting influence. You become more skilled and much more confident. The ability to face adverse conditions, the ability not to lose the balance, the attitude of determined perseverance improve your self-confidence

further – and thus would combine to open the doors to a more positive attitude. Purpose of life is better served when you are unwavering – in the face of problems; unaffected – in the face of defeats; unmoved – in the face of criticism. This must be your mindset.

11. Everyday is the first day of the rest of your life. Every day must be begun with hope, enthusiasm and confidence. Each new day offers wonderful opportunities – and unless you are ready, prepared and awake to utilise the new day, one more day will be lost, forever. **Each day we must grow and progress** and then only, we can become nearer to our goals. Make it a habit to start each day with sparkling enthusiasm and confident smile. Remember that each day you must progress further.

12. Record Keeping. Keep a record of the good deeds you have done, the appreciation you have received, the victories won, etc. If for some reason, you are feeling dull and depressed, lost and run down, refer to the record of earlier triumphs. Recollect the good days and the happy moods. Your dull mood will surely change for the better. Your confidence will get boosted. You feel surcharged with new enthusiasm. **New victories and successes seem more possible in that optimistic mindset.**

13. A list of things you like most. Maintain a list of things you like most as these are your real valuable assets – the songs that you liked most; the music that enthrals you; the books that you have liked most; the quotable quotes of the great souls that inspired you; the memorable gifts and presents that you received from the near and dear ones; the letters, the greeting cards and other sweet memories, etc. Referring to these assets will **lift your spirits and boost your sagging self-confidence.** You will find that your courage gets doubled; enthusiasm redoubled; weakening faith getting recharged and you would **spring back to higher levels of activity** leading to new series of successes. Remember that as long as a tree has the ability to sprout a new leaf, it is not to be considered as dead and useless. Similarly as long as you are able to regain your hope and faith, you have never lost.

14. Physical and Mental Health. Do not ever neglect your health. Health is your real wealth. Never neglect your family; never neglect your duties. Any victory obtained at the cost of neglecting your health, your family and your duties are unlikely to last long, and would come down crumbling like structures without proper foundations. '**Needs, Yes; Greeds, Never.**' **Hoping to get something more, never sacrifice the good things that you have presently got.**

15. Good Things must Grow. Whatever good things you have must increase further; whatever good things you do not possess as yet, must be acquired by fair means. Prayer helps; you become more deserving; you become eligible to obtain divine grace. **Successes must give you healthy happiness** – the one that stays for years to come.

Live a useful life that radiates self-confidence. Let everyone who comes into contact with you feel and benefit from your enthusiasm.

THINK, REFLECT AND ACT

1. Overide your existing bad habits, if any.
2. Identity and strengthen your good habits.
3. Create a self sustaining system to strengthen your existing good habits; acquire the required good habits and strengthen them further.
4. Donot invite any new bad habits, please.

Re-programme your brain accordingly.

Thoughts constitute the source of all things. Our mind is full of thoughts. It is only when our mind is full of good and positive thoughts, it becomes a good mind, capable of good words and good actions. It is only the good mind, with good thoughts that helps us to lead good lives. When we learn to think, and think better, we learn to know and will know better. Without learning to know, we will not be able to learn anything. **Good thoughts give us a noble and pure heart which forms the basis for a good behaviour which in turn leads to a good character.**

Character is our life.

1. Our Birth. Human birth is a great opportunity; a rare boon. It is not meant to be wasted or lost. Once we realise the value and purpose of this rare opportunity it becomes easy for us to get motivated to do good things. It is said that we should **strive to awaken divinity in us.** Practice human values. Invite noble ideas into your mind. Put those ideas into practice. Try to '**Be Good and Do Good**'. You must strive to contribute your mite to spread good things – not in a limited manner but to as many as possible. Be sure to be away from bad things.

2. Respect all. Respect equally – without any bias – without any distinction of any sort. Don't practice any type of discrimination whatever. Never insult any one. Never cheat. Lead life in such a way that you can command respect and admiration. **Lead your life with dignity and decorum.** Never do anything which would make you hang your head in shame and regret.

3. Cultivate good habits. Analyse your present habits. Have strong determination and acquire good habits. Remember, that you can imprint anything and make it a part of your habitual life, provided you **sincerely practice it for at least 21 days.** Without seriousness and keen interest we will not be able to achieve anything. Patience and perseverance help you to acquire a grip over the situation. **Actually you are acquiring a grip over your own mind and that leads to success.**

4. Take care. Don't neglect health. Don't be under the wrong impression that you can easily take care of your health, as and when it gets spoiled. You are aware that **prevention is better than cure.** Make it a habit to get up early in the morning and go for a brisk morning walk; do some physical exercise; develop and strengthen your immunity power. Try to be physically active and mentally alert.

5. Practice Yoga Pranayama. These time honoured practices do a lot of good. Remember that there is nothing religious about these things. These practices have attracted the attention of even the scientifically advanced western world. They help a lot, whatever be your age or profession. It is wrong to think that these practices are meant for aged people, and more particularly those who are interested in spiritual pursuits. It is good to get up early. Make it a point to observe calmly and in a unhurried manner, at least occasionally, sun rise and sun set. You feel recharged. **There is nothing like nature to relax your tired body and mind.** Attempt to see God the Almighty in Nature – since God is said to be omnipresent, it would be easier to search for him. **This divine orientation helps you to form the foundations for good thoughts, good words, good actions and good habits.**

6. Do meditation. Meditation bestows many benefits. It cleanses your mind of the accumulated tensions and impurities, if any; strengthens your thought processes; you begin to experience a calmness and bliss of a superior level. Let your prayers be not for pleading for a

wish-list. Chanting the name of the God makes you experience a bliss. You will experience calmness and will become composed. **You will develop concentration and peace of mind.** What more you want to experience in your life ?

7. Be Self-supporting. Make it a habit to do your things yourself. The habit of depending on others increases your dependence and develops into a weakness over a period of time. Doing your things yourself, you would acquire humility; you will appreciate dignity of labour; you will experience the value of simplicity. **It is good to be ambitious but it is not good to be greedy.** When you do not unnecessarily wish for things that are too high, to that extent your disappointments will also be reduced. Learn to stand on your own legs; never become a parasite. A bit less of selfishness releases a lot of positive force and we can do a great deal for the good of many. When the desires are under control, it becomes easier to be a bit more selfless. It leads to a positive attitude towards service. **Service, particularly selfless service, gives you a rare satisfaction. Satisfaction leads to happiness.** Service makes you forget the artificial distinctions and you tend to respect everyone equally. You experience a rare calmness and you will begin to appreciate the value of a happy and peaceful life.

8. Control your Desires. Desires dominate our mind. Desires without any discrimination will do more damage than good. Just as the banks of a canal help in directing the flow, a rational control of your desires helps you a lot. It is good to be prompted by a desire to earn more and live happily – the point being emphasized is that save a part of your income without fail. **Accumulated savings constitute the basis for wealth.** The present day tendency to spend a little lavishly combined with the availability of loans, instalment schemes, credit cards, - all add up to a very tempting situation. You will be constantly cajoled to spend more than what you are generally capable of, resulting in mortgaging your future income. **You have to make careful and rational choices before committing your future income.** Try not to borrow money, as far as possible. Remember that you have to repay the borrowed money, with interest. It would be a good practice to repay the debt, as early as possible, as otherwise the compounding effect will compel you to repay a much larger amount than what you thought you have to payback. Also remember that if there is some delay in the repayment or inability due to some unexpected developments, you will get a bad name and consequently lose the good reputation you might have enjoyed till then. **It is not that easy to get back the reputation, once you lose it.** Thus, a control on the desires leads to control on expenditure; results in planned savings, promotes better organized living – and the resultant peace of mind helps you to concentrate on the more important aspects of life. Satisfaction is wealth; gives peace of mind and leads to happiness. As you accumulate savings, be careful about investing the same – do not take mindless risks which may make you lose the amount. Safe investment opportunities, consistent with your risk preferences must be carefully chosen.

9. You are the Creator of your Destiny. Creating the possibility of a better future is in your hands. Put in your best efforts, work hard, work smart, improve your efficiency and there is nothing like being involved fully. Review your past styles of working / performance. **Are you sure that today you are better than what you were yesterday?** How did it happen? What contributed to this improvement? Now, rededicate yourself, improve continuously, so that your tomorrow can be still much better than what today is. This is how you have to **motivate yourself to improve continuously.** Invest your 'present' to create a better 'future' for yourself. Your destiny is in your hands. Be committed to create a better future.

- 10. Develop a Positive Personality.** What are the constituents for developing a positive personality? **Good thoughts, good words, good actions, good habits and good character are needed.** Honesty, sincerity, value-orientation, hard-working nature, commitment, discipline, etc. are expected and appreciated, whatever be the age and stage of life. No other alternative exists. **Thinking that these values are not needed in the present day world is wrong; it is only cheating yourself and cheating others.** Entertaining negative ideas will make you a loser. Work gives sound health. Health gives happiness. Happiness leads to good thoughts. **Good thoughts show you the right path. Right path motivates you to right action.** Right action leads to happiness. Thus, work is the starting point for achieving the purpose of life. There is nothing like small work or big work; all work must be done with a spirit of devotion. Being devoted to the work, improves your deserving nature and divine grace gets showered on you.
- 12. Goal-setting.** Goals are necessary for living a meaningful life. Having no goals is similar to shooting without aiming at any thing. Then, why shoot at all? Similarly, working aimlessly is nothing but wasting precious time. Unless you are careful, hours, days, months, years get wasted, without proportionate and corresponding benefit. **However tentative, it is good to have some goals.** Goals can be in different spheres of life. Goals can be classified, for the sake of convenience, in to two types; short term goals & long term goals. This would help you to focus better in choosing appropriate strategies. Discipline, determination, dedication, perseverance and continuous endeavour are necessary for achieving goals. Being equally serious about small goals and short term goals, will give you the confidence needed for achieving bigger goals and long-term goals.
- 13. Good Reading.** Read good books regularly and collect good concepts, wonderful ideas and brilliant thoughts. Make it a habit to note them down in a small notebook; preferably along with your own feelings and considered opinion. **Contemplate in depth and relate these concepts, ideas and thoughts to your life; and practice the relevant ones in your day to day life. Thoughts and ideas that have not got transformed into actions are useless.** Thoughtless actions are dangerous.
- 14. Know Yourself.** Observe carefully as to what type of thoughts you entertain generally. **Study as to what type of actions you perform, with what results, and with what responses from the people around.** Now that this analysis has helped you to know/ as to what type of thoughts currently dominate your mind, it would be easier for you to decide as to what should be further encouraged; and understandably, what should be discouraged and discontinued. The idea is, that you should concentrate and enrich your good characteristics; simultaneously, avoid bad traits. Never lose courage. Note that only a clean and pure life form the firm foundations for a happy and stable life.
- 15. Do not neglect human relations.** Particularly maintain cordial relations with your family. Honour the traditional systems like marriage and family. Remember that the manner in which you behave with your parents forms the basis for your children's behaviour towards you. **Your attitude towards your mother, mother tongue and mother land, decide the attitude that you can reach in your life.** Respect elders. Respect the teachers who gave you education and inspiration. The way you are living your life reveals the respect you give to your teachers and the education you had.

16. Spend some time with yourself. Every day allot some time for thinking; for planning; for reviewing and for reflecting. This habit will go a long way in shaping your future. Do not be in a hurry to implement the thoughts that may arise in your mind. Think carefully about the nature of the thought, its source, its impact, and weigh the pros and cons, before you consider implementing them. It is a good habit to make a note of the ideas that you consider as good and workable. Note that the lives of successful people, is the direct result of the good thoughts they have determinedly implemented. Welcome good ideas. One good idea attracts many more good ideas.

17. Appreciate the Good Qualities. Recognise the good qualities in others; appreciate their abilities. Appropriate appreciation, without flattery, gives jubilation. Proper praise motivates them to do many more good things. Your nature of genuinely praising good works gets noted and it would do good to you in the long run. The total impact would be: faster spread of good things. Don't you think this is important enough?

18. Learn to learn. Learn to be happy and smiling. Learn to be strong to face the oscillations in your life with equanimity. **Learn to Love.** Learn to review what has been learnt and further what new learning has taken place in actually practicing them. Be conscious that you have to prepare yourself for a responsible future, and hence, cultivate leadership qualities. Shoulder the responsibilities. Lead your life as a radiating light; live with inspiration; live in a manner that inspires others. In short, lead a life which will make you a role model.

Be sure that you are constantly gathering inspiring thoughts. Good thoughts form the basis for good actions.

*** IMPROVE YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS ***

It is the quality of our communication skills that shows our background, our sharpness of intellect, keenness of purpose, commitment to pursuit of excellence, discipline, sincerity, sweetness of nature, value orientation, sense of purpose, propriety, achievement-orientation... in short, every thing we have been, we are and we are likely to be. Thus, the quality of our communication skills convincingly reveals our worth to others with whom we are interacting.

Good communication skills will certainly help in making us more effective and efficient. When you improve the quality of your communication skills, your ability to communicate with yourself, i.e., internal communication or self communication improves, and forms the solid foundation for improved external communication or communication with others.

Good communication skills help you to do the right thing at the right time; also, it both gives and gets the required information from others, quickly and effectively. This certainly helps in improving relationships with all others. Considerable amounts of time, effort and other resources are saved. You start feeling enthusiastic. You start feeling the difference so readily that you will wonder as to why you did not realise till now the importance of improved communication skills.

Communication skills are not merely oral communication skills. It includes oral and written communication skills besides body language. It is true that the effect of oral communication skills can be considerably improved with good body language. However, written communication skills stand alone and do not directly depend upon body language.

Tune your mind. **Feel that improved communication skills would change you for the better.** The earlier you realise the advantages, the better it would be for you, for people around you and for the world with which you interact. There is always scope for further improving our skills.

YOUR OWN MIND IS YOUR GOLDMINE OF SUCCESS

Four simple steps are suggested for you to ponder. Improve your self-image and you will surely find that your own mind is your goldmine of success.

1. Smile frequently, honestly and wholeheartedly. This is absolutely necessary. It is not just sufficient that you are feeling it but the people around you must really see and feel the genuineness of your smile. Your smile, silently communicates that you are friendly and that you have a helping attitude.'

2. Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Treat others as important, because you expect that all others must treat you similarly. Listen attentively when they speak. Be helpful. Show consideration. Be grateful and graceful; and demonstrate your gratitude. There is a beautiful truth which you must appreciate – the more you genuinely help, you will find that more generous assistance comes to you – many a time from unexpected quarters. May be, the people whom you have actually helped may not be helping you; but you will be receiving the help from unknown and unsuspected sources.

3. Be Enthusiastic. Learn and practice to be a good team member. Adopt better work culture practices. **Success is the result and is available only when you have put in the required work in an excited, exciting, eager and enthusiastic way.** When you decide mentally to be enthusiastic, you will start feeling higher levels of physical energy and vibrating vitality. Enthusiastic approach from your side, may be slowly but surely, has a spread effect – spreads fast and ensures that all others start feeling and responding in an enthusiastic manner. Depending on your honesty you would even find people eager to help you succeed.

4. When enthusiasm energizes you, you will naturally practice perseverance. With this as the foundation you will become more courageous and your self-confidence levels improve. You will experience greater personal effectiveness. You will become more optimistic. **It would be a wonderful experience to realize that improvement in one sphere of activity will have many unexpected benefits extended to other spheres of activity.**

The combined effect of all these would naturally improve the chances of your success.

Are you feeling that what is suggested is too simple to be true? Before you question and deny the validity, you must at least give an honest trial and then come to your own conclusions. You must wake-up. **We seem to go through our life under the control of an internal automatic guidance system.** Why we get those ideas, what we do, how well we are performing, etc. all seem to be guided by some internal system. **The point is, can we consciously become positive, optimistic, honest, serious, sincere and develop a useful self-image?**

What is your present self-image? Surely, you would find that there is considerable scope for improvement. Analyze and find out the reasons for poor self-image, if any. Consciously put in the required efforts for wiping out your inferiority complex, if any. Correct the negative self-image and change it by challenging the bad habits that you might have acquired. Mere cleaning of the negative self-image by itself, will not suffice. That would only create a vacuum. **You must actively imagine and create a new, optimistic, powerful and positive self-image – which must help you to set and achieve worthwhile goals.**

Make goal-setting your first love, if you are serious and sincere about securing success.

30 ACTION – ORIENTED INSPIRING IDEAS

1. Our Human life is a boon. Birth should not to be considered as a mere biological coincidence. It is a wonderful opportunity to be put to proper use; the opportunity to learn; to experience; to expand; to excel. ‘Learning is a life-long activity’ – a continuous and never ending process – a conscious awareness of this single and simple truth is adequate to motivate you to learn and keep on learning; this consciousness would activate you; would put your life on the fast-track; will make you experience the joy of learning and living. Others would get inspired – looking at your positive and purposeful life – you become a role model - what more you want as a justification for proving that you have utilised the wonderful opportunity properly?

2. Learn constantly and continuously. Learning implies trying untiringly; experimenting and experiencing it means attempting to learn the unknown. Every one wants success in their endeavours; but may not be succeeding every time, in every thing. You must learn not to lose courage when you are faced with difficulties or defeat. **Never allow discouragement to engulf you;** learn the lessons from each experience; consider the failures as stepping stones to success. **Rededicate yourself to pursue your goals actively.** Become stronger mentally when you fail; The waves of the ocean should inspire you to relentless activity; continuous effort should become your disciplined duty. Every effort, with whatever result, will give you additional sheen; provide brighter clarity; offer wider scope and improve winning opportunities.

3. Proper Education and Right Culture. Education should give a proper appreciation of the meaning and purpose of life; how to go about; how to cultivate the good manners; how to lead a useful and purposeful life, etc. In short, education must help you to **properly discriminate between the animalistic tendencies and human nature.** We must first ascertain our present tendencies and begin to **commence the journey towards nobler goals.** Living for our own sake is understandable; but we must cultivate the view that being useful to others and to the society at large, ought to be our aim. As we expect that all others should come forward to help us, we must realize our duty that we should be ready and willing to help all others.

4. Work is Worship. Serving Man is Serving God. Our faith is our strength. Faith in God helps a great deal in cultivating proper culture. We must appreciate the finer points of the religion, to which we belong. **Appreciate the fundamental principles of spirituality, which are common to all religions.** In short, the essence can be stated as: If you are a Hindu, try to become a better Hindu; If you are a Muslim, try to become a better Muslim; If you are a Christian, try to become a better Christian; and so on. If for some reason, you do not have any faith in a particular religion, then **TRY TO BECOME A BETTER HUMAN BEING.** This ought to be our philosophy of life. **All our thoughts, words, actions and attitudes towards others must be tested on this bedrock.** The need for faith in God will motivate us to live in a manner, which will meet HIS approval. Many a time we find many people, who proclaim themselves as believers behave in a manner, which will never meet the approval of their religion. This is necessary because, as God is considered as Omnipresent, we should live with the awareness that he is everywhere and hence is capable of observing what all we are thinking, saying and doing. **When we accept the Fatherhood of God, we must unhesitatingly accept the brotherhood of humanity.** It now becomes easy not to discriminate. We will begin to see God everywhere and in everything. This is not easy but this awareness will surely improve us. Since God is everywhere, serving anyone would constitute serving HIM, by implication. This is Religion in Practice.

5.

Freeing ourselves from bondage. What binds us to Action is our attachment for the results thereof. Detachment from the results, frees us from the bondage. It is said that

it would be **better to concentrate on our work and not get worried about the results.** This attitude will help us to concentrate better on the efforts we are putting in, which ensures better quality performance. Working with enthusiasm, without attachment to the results, can be called as **KARMA YOGA.** On the contrary, working without any enthusiasm, feeling work as an avoidable burden, feeling the stress and discharging the duties grudgingly, will result in bondage, which can be called as **KARMA BANDHA.** Bondage imprisons independence. Happiness gets evaporated. **YOGA improves the skills;** helps in appreciating the fundamentals of spirituality.

6. Friendships: You must become a good friend to yourself. If you are not careful about your Thoughts, Words and Actions, your own thoughts, words and actions would prove harmful to yourself. Surely, this will not do any good to you. Thus, **Never become your own enemy.** Further, carefully analyse the good and not so good qualities and characteristics of your friends; probably, they will also be doing a similar exercise. Let at least 50% of your friends be those who are better than you in one respect or the other. **Select good friends. Avoid bad friends.**

7. Strengths & Weaknesses: You have to work continuously to become a better human being. Developing a well integrated personality is a continuous process. Analyse your strengths and weaknesses. **Strengthen your strengths further.** **Weaknesses must be weakened,** first by controlling them, and then eliminating them slowly & gradually – but firmly. In case you have strong will power, you can also try to stop your weaknesses, this very moment – yes, in one single instance. Invite new strengths, become a man of many abilities. Never invite new weaknesses. First honestly try to change yourself; later you can try to change others and also the society. Do your duty with devotion.

8. Read good books that inspire you. Read biographies & autobiographies of great people. **Reading the lives of great people will provide the needed inspiration.** Good ideas are scarce and thus invaluable. Never underestimate the motivation their lives can provide. You will have the dream of walking in their great foot steps.

9. Why live this life? Life is for living; for learning; for living happily; for learning to live happily; for learning how to make all others also love to live happily. Your life is a rare and a beautiful opportunity. You will not have an opportunity to re-live. Time never comes back. Don't waste your time. Your Life is nothing but your Time. One life-time may actually prove inadequate to learn to live your Life. You have to be careful and value oriented when it comes to allotting your time for various tasks.

10. Successes and Failures: Successes are most welcome; there is no guarantee that only successes are in waiting. Sometimes, in spite of our best efforts, we may have to face failures in our life. You have to be ready and willing to learn from failures and restart by putting your determined efforts to achieve your goal. Consider the failures as opportunities to strengthen your determination. Be positive and analyse your failures. Remember not to repeat your faults. **Proper and objective analysis of your failures will help in increasing the probabilities of future successes.** Victories will certainly add to the wealth of your experience. Failures too will more certainly add to your experience.

11. The Influence of our Attitudes. Our thoughts, words, actions and habits combine to influence our opportunities for success. It is important to avoid negative

thoughts, bad words, bad actions, etc. as they will increase the probability of failure. Don't prefer short cuts; don't fall a prey to temptations; never forget the values.

12. Share your Happiness. Sharing your happiness does not diminish your happiness but actually multiplies it. Imagine a situation, when you are happy about something and you have no one to share the happiness with. You would be feeling really miserable. When you are willing to share your happiness as well as a part of your prosperity with others it gives you more happiness. Cultivate the habit of helping others, remembering and respecting the values; earning money by rightful and fair means; using such wealth for good things; all these will add happiness to you and to others as well. **Fulfilment of desires by fair means only will add to satisfaction and happiness.** If you are fair and think of contributing to others' happiness as well, your own happiness will increase ten fold; otherwise, if you are not willing to share, it may get reduced to one-tenth of what it could have contributed. The decision is yours.

13. Desires. Unnecessary desires, unfair desires, undesirable desires, destructive desires will push you into troubles. Some times, even such desires may get fulfilled; but, they will not last long. Aim at lasting happiness.

14. Aim at making all others wish good things for you. Looks very simple, isn't it? Actually speaking, this is selfishness – pure and simple. But, wait; let us analyse further, without jumping to conclusions. Let us question as to, 'How does this aim become possible? Why should this be aimed at? When will all others be willing to wish good things for us?' Let's think. When we get something, without earning it; without deserving it; without working for it, in an unjust manner, disproportionately and particularly by exploiting or by depriving others – the society will not appreciate it. Others will not cooperate. However, if what we got is just, fair, without any exploitation, and we have worked for it and got it deservedly, further, it will not only be useful to us but also to others, and that we are willing to share it with all – then, others will surely appreciate it; they will not be jealous; they will further happily cooperate – and that leads to fulfillment; happiness for all. **Everyone wishing and working for the good of all, is the only way for all of us to become happy.** There is no other alternative. Whatever we do with this realisation in our mind, we will be doing well; getting the whole hearted cooperation of all others; and the whole atmosphere permeates with lasting peace and prosperity to one and all. That is the reason why it is necessary that we should aim at imbibing the spirit: "**Be Good and Do Good**". When you desire the good of all, and also actually work for it, all others will also be desiring good things for you. Is not that the spirit behind wishing good things to one and all – '**Sarve Janah Sukhino Bhavantu**' ?

15. Sleeping Habits : What constitutes adequate sleep? It depends on many factors. But not keeping track of your sleeping habits, is likely to encourage you to sleep more than what is necessary. Observe and see whether there is any scope for improvement. **If you want tomorrow to be decidedly better than today: Make it a habit to get up early in the morning.** Of course, it depends on the time when you get back home, in the evening / night. The point is, regular habits, sleeping sufficiently, so that you feel refreshed and recharged are very essential. However, sleeping more than what is necessary, not only results in wasting the excess hours, but invites avoidable dullness into your otherwise sharp mind, and you continue to feel dull and disinterested. The timings of your returning home will depend on many factors, such as whether you are studying, or working – and in the case of working people, on the working hours, and so on. What is important is sufficient rest and relaxation is necessary as otherwise, you will not be

able to give your best. Physical rest leads to mental relaxation and you will find it easy to get back your natural smiling attitude. Make it a point to leave your personal problems – at the threshold of your home: don't carry the burden along with you to your office/work place. Similarly, as far as possible, do not carry into your home the burdensome worries of the office. **It is not that easy to practice this sort of treating the problems as distinct, but there is no other way to handle them.** Further, this approach helps you to concentrate and you will tend to give your best – whether it is office or home or your studies.

16. Rest, Relaxation and Entertainment. After spending considerable time, outside the home, whether it is for study or work, you get tired and exhausted and you feel like resting; seek relaxation; may be expect some entertainment. Just think whether sitting in front of the TV, with remote in your hands, rushing through all the channels, will relax you? Or, is it that you are inviting additional stress and strain, watching so many not necessarily pleasant things, given the reality of the things happening around us. It is not suggested that you should avoid seeing TV. What is hinted at is, be selective about the channels, the timings, the programmes, the variety; **decide upon the total time you would like to spend with the TV, since it should not form the single source of relaxation and entertainment.** What is being suggested is that you should use your discrimination, be selective, so that your life style and preferences demonstrate discipline. There are more important things to do, keeping in view your short-term and long-term goals; many a time, we lose a lot of time; meanwhile, the type of news and programmes are very unlikely to turn on a positive mood, and the result is, you tend to postpone things, you ought to be giving priority to. **Do spend some time everyday viewing TV, in a selective manner** so that you can get healthy entertainment, increased awareness of the developments in various fields, and of course, some entertainment. A sort of ceiling on the total time for TV viewing is suggested; particularly, in view of the fact that it is likely to become addictive and likely to influence the habits of other youngsters living with you.

17. Exercise. Doing some physical exercise, both in the morning and evening, will prove very useful in the long-run. Strangely, we have a tendency to skip, and we are very creative in searching for excuses for missing the schedule. Experts generally suggest that some time in the morning should be set apart for physical exercise. We are recommending splitting into two parts, would at least motivate you not to skip the schedule, both times; hopefully, you tend to do it at least once – the bare minimum. **Doing pranayama, yoga and meditation regularly will further strengthen your immunity power.** Learn the many useful techniques that are recommended for mental relaxation as well. Sometimes, relaxing the mind should get priority over relaxing the body, as a relaxed mind speeds up the internal processes and the body feels more relaxed. You feel more enthusiastic, willing to do more and in a better way – all this would surely add up to more successes.

18. Reviewing Day's activities. After relaxing for a while, review the work you have done during the day; things completed, started but could not be completed, could not be started for various reasons, - should all get reviewed – **so that you can plan for the next day, more effectively.** May be you have to give particular attention to things, which were getting postponed, for some reason or the other. Also, new things might have got added to the list of things to be done. While all this is important in respect of the routine things, **it is more essential to review, as to what extent you have progressed further in the direction of the goals you have set for yourself.** Ensure that doing something at least is better than not doing anything at all.

19. Prioritization. It is very useful to have a clear idea about both the **importance and urgency of the things to be done**. Broadly, things can be categorized as Important and Urgent; this would help you to further identify the Important tasks as: 1. Very Important, 2. Important, and 3. Less Important. Similarly, the Urgent tasks can be categorised as: 1. Very Urgent, 2. Urgent, and 3. Less Urgent. This categorisation and further sub-categorisation will help you to focus better and prioritise appropriately. **This will help you to wisely allot your otherwise scarce time, energy and resources.** Also, you would be able to note that certain of the tasks you have to do are appearing in more than one category – for example, is both Very urgent and Very important – in this case, it is very clear that you have to immediately attend to it, without any further delay or discussion. However, things that are not ‘that important’ and ‘that urgent’ – will get lower levels of priority and you know very well, that after all other things are done, you can take up these things, or as well consider postponing them to a more opportune moment.

Certain tasks may get classified as ‘Very Important’, but ‘Not Urgent’. Simply because they are under the ‘not urgent’ category, if you continuously neglect them, you are likely to miss a great deal. An example will make the point clear. Goal-setting is very important but not urgent; because it is not urgent, you constantly postpone and do not attempt to identify your goals, the result will be obvious. You will be losing precious time, and with the absence of goals, you are likely to be drifting in an aim-less world, wasting your time, energy and resources. The basic idea in discussing in detail is to make you realize the importance of prioritization and proper planning, particularly useful in the context of time management – You are aware that better Time Management leads to better Life Management.

Sometimes, you may feel that you are spending some valuable time doing this exercise – you may even feel that it is better not to spend any time, doing this sort of exercise, and you can as well do something instead. The point is, though it may look as spending some important time, doing this sort of exercise, **your mind would get tuned to the task and will develop the habit of doing this exercise much faster, and you will certainly get significant benefits, over the long run.**

The purpose of all this exercise is to list - the things to be done, the order in which they must be attempted, the possibility of grouping certain related tasks on certain parameters, tuning your mind, etc. Since our mind will be thinking constantly, there are likely to be minor changes, major alterations, additions, deletions, reconsiderations, etc. – Please understand that this is natural and do not get discouraged, particularly in the early days of getting seriously organized – which is quite a different and unfamiliar style from your habitual approach to doing things. Simply because things do not happen the way you are planning, do not come to conclusion that all this exercise of thinking, prioritizing, planning – is a big waste of time. Whatever be the number and size of changes, it is always beneficial to plan and move ahead.

Constant review and consequently continuous re-planning become necessary.

Do not lose your heart, in practicing this rigour. You get used to this useful process, and acquire the needed discipline in your life. Discipline is not at all any punishment; it is not loss of liberty or freedom. Discipline protects you; discipline better ensures success in your endeavours; discipline acts as insurance against failure. Let us take a familiar example to make this clear. Surely, you are conversant with the traffic rules. Just imagine, what would be state of utter confusion, if no such rules were to exist; it is a different thing that many people do not have a traffic sense, the traffic control needs to be improved, and so on. However, you will not suggest an abolition of all

traffic rules, merely because many people are not following them. Similarly, in many other aspects of our life, we need discipline. Without discipline, nothing much can be achieved. In short, **discipline is the best "Sree Rama Raksha".**

20. Health and Food. We must learn to appreciate the close relationship between the food we eat – its quality, quantity and variety – on our health, including its impact on the immunity system. To begin with, **it is good to understand whether 'we live to eat' or is it that 'we eat to live.'** You have to know whether we are eating to live or living to eat. It is good to finish eating our dinner, two to three hours before our going to bed. Eating in a hurry is bad; combined with immediately going to bed after the dinner, it does more harm.

Once you start losing control on your health, you start feeling dull, become more lazy, much more neglecting many aspects, including your health. A general feeling of complacency sets in, making you feel that there is nothing serious about the health disorder and if it becomes necessary, there are doctors and medicines, to care of the problem, as and when it really becomes problematic. Don't invite ill health with such an attitude.

Keep yourself away from all unhealthy habits. Properly digesting what you have eaten is the fundamental thing in ensuring proper health. If you develop some interest and keenness, it becomes easy to observe the changes that are taking place in your digestive and excretion system; **they give you the initial warnings that are necessary.** It is only when you do not recognise the problem, the problem becomes more problematic and grows out of control. Strangely we tend to ignore many such simple things and worry about them only when they go out of our control. Further, any one of our sub-systems, when neglected for a long period of time, has a tendency to spread and affect the efficient functioning of the other sub-systems. Further, barring a few, many medicines might have unknown side-effects – and they would only add to the complications further.

Food habits, the liquids that we consume, along with many other habits have a considerable impact on our health. **Simple suggestions like taking 8 to 10 glasses of water every day, are generally ignored.** The earlier we realise the better it would be that the food we take, the water we drink, the air we breath, the physical exercises we do – have a **substantial influence on the condition of our health.** There are many such useful points. However, the scope of this small booklet restricts the temptation to share that information. Be on the lookout and gather the information for yourself; more important, put it to use. Without physical health supporting you, you cannot be hopeful of success on many other fronts. Probably, the essence can be summed up as: **LISTEN TO YOUR STOMACH; NOT YOUR TONGUE.**

21. Restful and undisturbed sleep. Observe carefully your sleep habits: the total time spent sleeping, the regularity, the number of times you get disturbed, the reasons for a disturbed sleep, the type of dreams - their causes and effects - whether you feel rested and recharged when you get up or you still feel like resting for a longer period of time and so on. The first point to be noted is that it would be better to have regular habits as otherwise your body will not be cooperating with you fully. It is good to plan for a peaceful Sleep. Notwithstanding your tensions, worries, pending works and problems, try to be calm and relaxed before going to bed. It is better to stop viewing the TV at least 15 to 30 minutes before trying to sleep. Viewing some programme of a type which is not peaceful, clean and calm, particularly postponing the sleeping time, is nothing but compulsorily inviting all those violent and disturbing thoughts into your mind. Surely your sensitive mind that received these suggestions just before going to bed,

will continue to be working on similar lines – and the result is you cannot enjoy good sleep. May be unknowingly, you will be influenced by the programmes you are viewing.

It would be better to cultivate the habit of reading some pleasant and inspiring book or listen to pleasant and enlightening music, enjoy the calmness and experience a feeling of serenity, before retiring for the day. Then, you are likely to experience sound sleep. Getting sound sleep enables you to get up with a peaceful mind. Sleep must give rest for the body and also rest for your mind. Do not sleep more than what is necessary. Similarly do not strain your body and mind by sleeping inadequately. **Whether you had sufficient sleep or not is clearly understandable by you – because the way you feel in the morning when you wake up, automatically reveals the quality of the sleep you had.** When you wake up you must feel recharged and that every cell of your body and mind are bursting with enthusiasm; you must feel like spending the rest of the day with a healthy smile. There is nothing particularly wrong with the dreams but the type of dreams that you generally have a determining influence on your daily activities. Dream good and healthy dreams and wake up to transform those dreams into a reality.

22. Don't be in a hurry; be calm. It is not a good habit to get up late and be in a great hurry; finding insufficient time for breakfast and hence, skipping it; forgetting things which you planned to do; not collecting all the items and papers, that you wanted to carry with you, etc. When you are tense, you tend to make more mistakes; you get upset; you become irritable; your smiles evaporate and maybe you start cursing the day and everyone around. Surely, this is no way to begin a new day.

Getting ready, for the next day, the previous night itself, as far as possible, is a much better habit. Your mind will be working silently and if necessary would automatically remind you of things that you have forgotten. Keeping all your papers ready, cross checking things and calculations, reviewing the day and revising the plan for the next day, if necessary, all add up to a better work style and would go a long way in improving your effectiveness. It is always a good habit to have sufficient time in the morning, before stepping out of your home, to check whether everything is in order.

23. Smile: A pleasant smile and a calm mind, are your assets, as you step out of your home every morning; you cannot accomplish any worthwhile things, if you are feeling otherwise. **Your smile and cool disposition reflect your health.** People would like to work with you and work for you when they find that they themselves feel good in your presence. Doing things effectively and getting things done, help you to gain more successes.

24. Responsible behaviour. All of us are aware that we have both responsibilities and rights. It is good to remember that our responsibilities are others' rights; our rights are others' responsibilities. Many people are usually more demanding in respect of their rights and generally speaking, are not that serious when it comes to discharging their responsibilities equally seriously. **If you want to be different from the rest of the crowd, it is better to remember that people like only those who are more serious and sincere about discharging their responsibilities.** Hence, make it a habit to tune your mind accordingly. Stop grudging and complaining when others are not as serious as you are. When they find that you are of a different kind, very soon they would realise their own responsibilities and your rights almost get honoured; you need not have to complain – only thing is you have to first cultivate this attitude in yourself and expect to motivate others. **Discharge all your**

responsibilities in the best possible manner. Properly discharged responsibilities contribute to successes. Your work-style will have a spread effect; you start motivating your team; and you will very soon find a positive mood setting in.

Strive hard to get the reputation that you are '**a man of Responsibility**'; here is a person '**who discharges his duties and completes whatever task has been assigned with sincerity**' is the reputation you must strive to enjoy. This reputation is very necessary if **you want to come up in life**. Just imagine, what happens if you do not enjoy this type of reputation. People would not be willing to entrust you with any responsible work; you will be side-stepped and forgotten. Very soon, you would feel miserable and lose interest in whatever you are doing.

Simply because the work is trivial in nature, don't take it lightly and do it a negligent manner. Whether the work is trivial or great do it equally seriously. There are many people who do their personal works, very seriously, and if the work belongs to others, they take it lightly and do not give the serious thought that is necessary. This half-hearted nature will result in adoption of double standards and very soon people will find it out. They may not complain or say anything frankly on your face; but they would not entrust you with responsible works.

Works discharged with great care and responsibility will boost your self-confidence. **You will acquire better discipline, improved skills, positive attitude and fair dealing – all this leading to a better reputation.** People want persons with these qualities. They would like to have such positive minded people as their friends, as their team mates and also as their bosses. You will be accepted as a preferred person and will start playing the role of a role model. This would catapult you to positions of greater responsibility. You would acquire and develop leadership qualities. You will tend to be less selfish and more interested in the success of the team than acquiring individual recognition. Your team-building qualities will attract greater responsibilities and more opportunities will start coming in your way. Your experience and positive attitude towards your responsibilities will help you to succeed. Your confidence improves. You succeed better; you start feeling much more happy; you become the centre of a healthy change in the society around you; you start creating wealth; and you will also enjoy better your own share in the increased wealth that got created due to your responsible behaviour.

Some are lucky and have this discipline of responsible behaviour right from an early stage, **thanks to the training given by their mother, example provided by their father and the inspiration given by their teachers.** However, all the people may not be lucky to have such an opportunity. Do not have the attitude that 'since, you were all the while not serious, why unnecessarily invite now the trouble of becoming more responsible'. You should not feel like continuing to live in the same old way. Whatever was your earlier background, from now on, **you can acquire new habits, new styles of positive thought, word and action, and new and positive attitudes towards your responsibilities.** Today, can become a **Turning Point in your life, provided you take the decision right now.**

Living a responsible life is practicing Dharma. Protect Dharma and Dharma protects you. Dharma is righteous living. Dharma and responsible living are closely related. Responsible living or righteous living or practicing Dharma – call it by any name, can be considered as the **essence of all religions.** Simply because different religions practice different forms of worship, different customs and traditions, it does not mean that they have different versions of Dharma. **While following our own religion we must respect all other religions.** We must observe

the deeper meaning and significance of religions. We must rise to a higher level of abstraction and appreciate the significance of spirituality. We must appreciate the human values that are commonly respected by all faiths. Practicing such spiritual awareness results in our **recognising divinity in every one and every thing around us – including ourselves**. This would enable us to be a little less selfish; we tend to do more good to the people and the society; we start appreciating things from an altogether different perspective. We start appreciating the value of Love – we will be inviting Love into our heart. When we put love into whatever we are doing, it becomes purer; this purity leads us to appreciate unity among all things; this unity leads us to divinity. Thus, Love leads to realisation of Divinity. **Awakening divinity in ourselves and helping to awaken this divinity in others is considered as the purpose of life.** Practicing spirituality with love towards one and all is the essence of Dharma. Thus, responsible behaviour leads us to follow Dharma and helps in proper appreciation of divinity.

The idea that let the whole world change first, then I will change immediately is not justifiable. You cannot expect the ocean's waves to cease and allow you to have your bath. Everyone must strive to move towards goodness, practice Dharma, live a responsible life, irrespective of what the rest of the people are doing. Such behaviour will help in bringing about a change for the better in the world. Do not adopt the attitude of 'you first, me next'; instead practice 'me first'. This is the essence of responsible behaviour.

25. Responsibility towards your parents. Fast life style, increasing selfishness, may be self-centeredness, intolerance, disrespecting tradition, disrespecting customs, rejecting the good, old-time values have all become the current fashion. Parents must be respected and taken care of. It is unfortunate that a time has come, when it has become necessary to talk about it. The increasing number of Old-age homes, proves the point. Just imagine, how would you feel if your own children neglect you in your old age. **May be your own children observe keenly and silently how you have treated your own parents, and practice the same towards you.** Of course, you treating your parents well, does not by itself guarantee that your children will treat you better. However, it is hoped that you will be taking sufficient interest in your children and pass on the good values and as a result you have better chances of being taken care of. Nobody would be able to correctly guess as to what would be the prevalent thinking, say, after 30 or 40 years. It is a different thing to plan for your retirement and take care of yourself and your spouse, without expecting much from your children. But, you must strive to pass on better values to your children; do your Dharma. 'Everything is Mother's grace!' Isn't it true? **Respect your Mother; respect motherhood; respect womanhood.**

26. Increasing happiness in your life... It would do good to constantly remember certain simple truths: money can buy food but not hunger; money can buy medicines but not health; money can buy comfortable pillows but not sound sleep; similarly, **money can buy so many things but it can't buy lasting happiness.** No doubt, money is important; but, probably how you have earned that money is much more important, when you sincerely desire that the money earned must contribute to your lasting happiness. **Earn money by rightful means;** you will have a clean and clear conscience to enjoy the fruits thereof. Along with earning money, it is also important to take care of the manner in which you are spending your money. Don't waste your money by spending on unnecessary things, in a lavish manner. As with many other things, moderation is important; saving a part of what you are earning is important as otherwise you cannot continue to become richer. The means you have adopted to earn money decides the type of happiness you are likely to obtain. Money earned by unfair means is likely to

be spent on wasteful and harmful items. May be you will find it difficult to experience it in the short term, but look at the people around and you will appreciate the truth better.

27. Search for Happiness Vs. Weakness for Pleasures. Temporary pleasures will have their own consequences and thus do not give you lasting happiness. It is very necessary to be aware of difference between the two so that you know the things that should be avoided and the things that should be sought after. Money can give you the ability to buy certain pleasures; but, after those few moments of exhilaration, they are likely to lead you into a myriad of problems, for which no known solutions exist; may be you get accustomed and have already turned into a slave even before realizing it. Why be so unkind and unmerciful about such trappings? Surely, you have more important things to do in your life than wasting it on trivial things. It is important to always analyse the consequences of your actions, before attempting to do something. It is helpful to think of the difference between the virtues and vices, whenever you are thinking of happiness. Certain things belong to the lower stage, while certain things belong to a higher stage and make you experience bliss. In your search for happiness, note that materialistic happiness and physical enjoyments have a role, a limited role, it is better to remember that such happiness should not pull you down to the level of an animal. **Look forward to eternal bliss.** Happiness begins in the layers of your heart and mind. Whenever you are in doubt as to whether something should be sought after or not, it is better to be guided by the principle: 'Do unto others, as you want others to do unto you.' Your values and your character determine your preferences. You have a right to be happy but by righteous means. Do not fall a prey to the temptations and lose the precious opportunity of this life.

28. Keep yourself away from bad habits and vices. The attraction of the vices and bad habits is very powerful; once you fall into the trap and become a victim, it will be very difficult to extricate yourself from their clutches. Knowingly or sometimes unknowingly, you are likely to be influenced by others. **What begins as a harmless single exposure just one-time stand, sucks you into the trap, which generally is inextricable.** That is why you have to be firm and never be willing to accept the first step; because, there will be no opportunity to take your step back. What you started doing secretly and privately, will establish a strong and deep hold on you, and very soon you will dare to do it openly, publicly, and tend to justify on some pretext or the other. You may even forget the sense of shame that you had earlier. **If you want to come up in your life, become something, achieve your goals, then you have to avoid bad habits.** You might have read some success stories of people who turned a new leaf in their life; but, just think, why unnecessarily get involved first, and then think of mustering the strength later to correct your course of action?

29. Values in life. Values are very important in the human life. **LOVE, TRUTH, RIGHTEOUSNESS, PEACE AND NON-VIOLENCE are the human values.** Every one may or may not become great. You may or may not get money, reputation, authority or power. But surely, you can honestly try to become a good human being. You have to try with commitment and dedication. The simple guiding factor would be to do things that are good for others, such that they will be liked by God. **Try to keep your heart pure. Be positive and clear in your thoughts; straight and positive in your words, fair and just in your actions.** Our actions not only influence others, but will also influence our own personality. Our attitude towards values plays a vital role in determining what type of a person we are going to become. We must become better, play our part in creating a world where everyone does his duty for the happiness of all others. There is no other Heaven, anywhere else;

If we can't create

a Heaven here, we will be succeeding in creating a Hell. Surely, you have a responsibility.

30. Get inspired to Act; Act to inspire others. The world around is so different, so fast-changing and so tempting. You must have a lamp lit in your heart that guides and shows you the way. That is why it is important to have inspiration. Do not remain idle cursing the encircling darkness, wake up to take up the challenge of lighting a lamp, however small it might be, and do your bit to spread light and delight. It is good to remember that a small ray of light can shatter the darkness, however dense and threatening it might seem to be.

We humbly hope that reading this material has provided some points to think further; if you feel inspired, put something into practice; let the world see that you are different and that you have decided to take charge of your life. Be positive in thought, word and action. Live a life that inspires others.

In case you liked at least one of the many points explained in this book, we request you to share it with at least one of your friends. Help us do our bit to spread the good thoughts.



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V. Viswanadham

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MAY LORD GANESHA INSPIRE YOU

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SOLID FOUNDATIONS
YIELD SUCCESSFUL RESULTS**

Just look at the very pleasant face of Lord Ganesh, for a while. Start searching for meaning and identify the significance of the unique features. The big head, relatively bigger ears, comparatively small eyes, restless trunk, a mouth that is covered by the trunk, are some of the many features you are likely to notice. Do they communicate any thing of special significance that would inspire us to learn? Let us not merely pray with folded hands; let us feel the message, get inspired, put it in practice and gain.

Lord Ganesha's big head indicates that we must think with a broad perspective; become wiser and make useful and profitable decisions. Let our decisions bring prosperity to one and all. The big sized ears suggest that we should patiently listen, don't jump to conclusions, be receptive to new ideas; be willing to consider objectively the suggestions that others may offer. Let our listening skills improve and let us become better communicators. The small eyes hint that you must be focussed; concentrate on the task, as otherwise it would not be possible to achieve the results. Let our discipline and determination get strengthened. The restless trunk suggests that you should always be inquisitive; search for significance from all angles; learn continuously. Let us develop our learning orientation. The concealed mouth indicates that we should talk less and listen more; to think well before opening the mouth to communicate what we are thinking. Let the spirit of our positive thoughts get revealed in our positive words, which in turn form the foundation for positive actions. The pleasantly smiling face convinces us that unless you yourself are happy in your heart, you will not be able to spread happiness all around; be sure to radiate your confident and happy nature, wherever you go, and whatever you do. Let positive actions bring happiness to everyone.

When you get inspired from Lord Ganesha, you would be able to see the goal more clearly; the discipline would get strengthened; the way to achieve success becomes visible; you will acquire the determination to clear obstacles, if any; thus, you can be positively more sure of success in your good endeavours. Life acquires meaning, purpose and significance. Your life will be blessed.

Spirituality explains that 'The Formless' has acquired 'Form' to facilitate our visualisation. 'The Nameless' has acquired a 'Name' to help us to concentrate. 'The Attributeless' has acquired 'Attributes' to draw our attention and help us to focus better. When we develop the intense habit of concentration and do good things, we will be invoking divine blessings. We will be able to transcend to higher levels of abstraction.

What more you seek?

Now, it is for you to take the initiative and step forward. Good Luck.

"We must become the change we want to see"
- Mahatma Gandhi

Let us all LOVE TO LIVE, and LIVE TO LOVE

- "Sri Ram" Sir

JUST FEW MORE WORDS . . .

Are there any new ideas in this book? Surely not. Are there any ideas that are already not known to you? Probably not. You might then ask, why this effort? You are right. We are not saying that we are presenting here new ideas or things that were never heard of. **Though these things are known to all, we felt that even these simple things are generally forgotten and ignored.** The dilution that has taken place in many spheres of life, leading to unhappiness all around, made us feel that this humble reminder is necessary. You might also ask: Why are you doing this? What will you get out of this? Our answer is; we are doing this out of Love for you; for the society for our nation; and for God.

Our mind is full of thoughts. If these thoughts are positive and good, they will inspire you and help you in moulding your life in a successful manner. **Positive thoughts which certainly include human values will do a lot of good to you and through you to the whole society.** That is the reason why you should constantly be in the company of positive thoughts. You must continuously read good books in order to constantly replenish and strengthen your inspiration. **Start a programme of collecting good and positive thoughts from your reading.** Spend some time reflecting on those thoughts and see how you can relate yourself to the essence of the thoughts. **Put some of those noble and uplifting ideas into practice.** Invite the new experience wholeheartedly. Enjoy living a life which realizes its potential, serves its purpose and just do not stop there, move on to inspire others. **Not just thoughts, not mere words, but actions are required;** that too, in a sustaining manner.

This small book is like a seed. Just as a seed sprouts and gives you seed-bearing fruits, which in turn give you fruit-bearing seeds, revealing to you the beauty and abundance of Mother Nature, similarly allow the good ideas presented in this book to do their work. We feel that this humble attempt will prove beneficial to you. We would feel glad, if this could be of some use to you. However, if for some reason you do not like something in this book do feel free to get in touch with us, either by making a call or by writing a post card.

If you happen to like at least a part of the book and the spirit behind this non-profit initiative, we request you to help us in spreading this amongst your friends and well-wishers. You can pass on this book to your friends; or may be, gift it to them. Spreading good things is also a good thing.

Set apart some time every day for reading good and inspiring books. Keep a note book and a pencil ready. Go on collecting at least one good thought every day. You will be pleasantly surprised to note that you would be having a minimum of additional 365 thoughts, at the end of the year. The very process of collecting good thoughts will begin to shower benefits on your life. You will become more positive in your thought, word and deed, your attitude towards life and others will improve further, for the better. You start feeling happier and refreshed. **You feel enthusiastic and start spreading & sharing the feeling of happiness you are experiencing.** If everyone acts, for the benefit and happiness of all others, what else is required to create a Heaven on Earth?

Make up your mind to become a better person. You have to take the initiative yourself. You have to be disciplined, determined and persistent to put in the required effort to succeed in life. Wake Up! Take Up! Wake Up! And Come Up!

Wishing you all the very best and Good Luck in all your good endeavours.

Prof. V.Viswanadham,

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Hope you would not mind the friendly suggestions being given here.

1. First, make up your mind, that the book you are reading is meant to encourage you to focus on your present attitudes and that you are interested in seriously examining the possibility of improving yourself further.

2. Please keep ready a pen or pencil, along with some white papers [or preferably a note book], as you begin reading this book.

3. Depending on your habit, you may prefer to mark the relevant portions in the book itself, or make a separate note of the things that particularly interest you.

4. It is a good practice to note down important points, preferably in your own words, which require a reflection, internalisation and review. May be you would like to seek some clarifications or some further details. Or, may be you would like to summarize, in your own words, the essence of what you have liked most.

5. The most important point is what points you are identifying as things that merit your immediate attention – **the Action Points**. Identify the points that you intend to act upon. Prioritize them. Select the most interesting point on which you feel like taking the initiative. Concentrate your effort on that single point; it becomes easier to achieve perceptible progress.

6. Now think of a **M.A.P. – My Action Plan**. Prepare a programme of action to seriously implement in a committed manner. Please remember that any Action Plan must provide for a specific time-frame.

7. Do not get distracted or discouraged by initial responses to your newly taken initiatives. Sometimes, our present company of friends may be discouraging us; or may be, we feel upset at the initial setbacks that we are likely to encounter, particularly when you are interested in changing your old habits and outlook. Be firm, determined and disciplined.

8. Keep a record of your ideas, your plans, your efforts, along with the results you have obtained and review your planning so that you can make a more serious and determined effort to commence your journey of self-development.

We wish you all the best in your honest endeavours.

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